



*Touching Lives Since 1897
Au coeur de la vie depuis 1897*

NEWS RELEASE

VON ENCOURAGES MINUTE OF REFLECTION AT 9:09 A.M. IN HONOUR OF INTERNATIONAL FASD DAY

For release September 9th, 2006

OTTAWA, September 9, 2006 - Today, at 9:09 a.m., VON (Victorian Order of Nurses) encourages Canadians to take a moment of reflection in honour of FASD day. FASD Day is the short name for International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day. On the ninth minute of the ninth hour of the ninth day of the ninth month, the world is asked to remember that during the nine months of pregnancy, a woman should not drink alcohol. This is the eighth year that FASD Day has been recognized internationally.

“This is a small way of recognizing FASD day and the millions of Canadians who have been affected by the disorder,” said Dr. Judith Shamian, President and CEO of VON Canada. “VON will continue to work with the national FASD community on prevention awareness, awareness of those who are living with FASD, and how the community can support these individuals, their caregivers and families.”

VON Canada has worked closely with the national FASD community since 2002 in the completion of a four-year project funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada focusing on the development of parent-driven best practice guidelines and strategies in caring for children and adults with FASD. A user-friendly publication entitled *Let's Talk FASD* has been developed to assist families and caregivers of children and adults with FASD. A final report that outlines the process undertaken to develop the guidelines and strategies is also available. In addition, VON Canada hosts a national listserv that focuses on FASD. For more information please visit www.von.ca/fasd.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, or FASD, is an umbrella term used to collectively refer to a range of disabilities caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol. FASD includes the diagnostic terms Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS), and Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND). Therefore, FASD is an inclusive terminology that represents the spectrum of effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol, which can range from mild to very severe. FASD is PREVENTABLE. The only way a child can be born with FASD is if the mother consumes alcohol during pregnancy.

VON is a national health organization and registered charity offering over 50 programs and services including home care, personal support, workplace wellness programs and community services including Meals on Wheels and Volunteer Visiting. For over 100 years, VON has been at the forefront of Canada's fast-changing health and social policies.

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